



Connecting the Dots: Wildfire, Forest Health, and Sustainable Rural Economies

**October 29, 2009
8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

Symposium Participant Biographies

Jim Branham

Executive Officer, Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Jim has spent more than 25 years working on natural resource and rural community issues. He was selected as the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's first Executive Officer by the SNC Board in October of 2005. As Executive Officer, Jim is responsible for day to day management of the organization and works closely with the Governing Board and stakeholders in developing policy and program priorities.

Prior to assuming his current position, he served as Undersecretary of the California Environmental Protection Agency from November 2003 through October 2005. There, he assisted in shaping and implementing Governor Schwarzenegger's environmental policy, including work in the areas of air and water quality.



Randy Moore

Pacific Southwest Regional Forester, USFS

Randy Moore became Pacific Southwest Regional Forester in late October 2008, giving him overall responsibility for 18 National Forests in California, as well as S&PF programs in Hawaii and the affiliated Pacific Islands, covering one-fifth of the state or 20 million acres of land. He was previously the Eastern Regional Forester in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, a position he took in 2002.

A native of Bastrop, Louisiana, Moore graduated from Southern University in and began his federal career with the U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service in North Dakota. He started his career with the U.S. Forest Service in 1980, with assignments on the Pike and San Isabel National Forests in Colorado, and the Comanche and Cimarron National Grasslands in Kansas. He served as Deputy Forest Supervisor and then as Forest Supervisor of the Mark Twain National Forest in Missouri. He has served in numerous other assignments at the local, regional, and national levels. Moore has also had national-level experience in Washington, D.C., having served as acting Associate Deputy Chief; acting National Deputy Soils Program Manager; and participating in the Legislative Fellows Program working with former U.S. Senator Johnston (D-LA).

Randy and his wife Antoinette have two sons, a daughter-in-law, and grandson.



Steve Wilensky

County Supervisor, Calaveras

Supervisor Wilensky was elected to the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors in 2003. He is the owner and operator of Humbug Creek Farm and Cider Mill, Glencoe. Supervisor Wilensky retired from Service Employees International Union in 2003 after 23-year career as a union organizer, chief negotiator, regional coordinator, and staff director. Married to Patricia Noll, R.N. L.AC., registered nurse and licensed acupuncturist, since 1986, together they have two daughters, Hannah and Kate.

**Brett Storey**

Senior Management Analyst, Placer County
Rocklin City Council Member

Brett is employed as a Senior Management Analyst for the Placer County CEO/OES office where he works to make Placer County fire safe, implementing alternative energy projects, working to re-license the American River hydroelectric project and managing many emergency service programs. He spent 15 years in the aerospace industry designing airplane cockpits and another 9 years working as a world-wide procurement manager at Hewlett Packard. He graduated from California State University, Chico in 1982 with a BS in Business Administration, and he also attended graduate school at USC in Systems Engineering.



Brett was first elected to the Rocklin City Council in 2000. He also served as Mayor in 2004 and 2008. Brett has lived in Rocklin for 17 years with his wife Corinne (a local 2nd grade teacher) and three children.

Steve Frisch

President, Sierra Business Council

Steve has managed a variety of programs at SBC including Placer Legacy, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy effort, and the Working Landscapes Initiative – a program that has protected 30,000 acres of working farms and ranches that are essential to our region's economy, wildlife and cultural legacy. He also manages sustainable business and building projects to encourage the adoption of socially responsible business and development practices. Prior to joining the Sierra Business Council, Steve owned and operated a small business in Truckee, California and was president of the Truckee Downtown Merchants Association. Steve has served on the Nevada County Welfare Reform Commission, the Town of Truckee redevelopment agency formation committee and as an advisor to the California Resources Agency's California Legacy Project.

Steve holds a BA in Political Science from San Francisco State University. He has continued his education with professional business and natural resource management courses and leadership development courses. Steve is also a graduate of the California Culinary Academy.

Steve lives in Truckee with his wife Lisa. He is an avid reader of history, politics, community planning and Sierra issues. Steve enjoys traveling the back roads, connecting to local history, camping and cooking.

Jay Francis

Forest Manager, Collins Pine

Craig Thomas

Executive Director, Sierra Forest Legacy

Craig Thomas co-founded Sierra Forest Legacy in 1996 as the Sierra Nevada Forest Protection Campaign. Craig oversees all of our programmatic work and coordinates our Forest Conservation Program. Craig has been intimately involved in the protection and restoration of the forests of the Sierra Nevada for over twenty-five years and continues working to find solutions to the threats facing Sierra Nevada forests and communities today.



Craig has a degree in cultural ecology, which is the study of the ecological, economic and spiritual relationship of people to their landscapes. He has led Sierra Forest Legacy's efforts to not only defend the Sierra from excessive logging, but to also protect Sierra communities from wildfire and to find environmentally sustainable solutions to reducing wildfire hazard, such as the utilization of small diameter trees and brush removed in forest thinning efforts. Before founding Sierra Forest Legacy Craig was a small-scale organic farmer and often lectured at local universities on sustainable farming practices and holistic agriculture.

Craig is a 28-year resident of the Sierra Nevada and calls the foothills north of Placerville his home. When he is not working hard on behalf of the forests he enjoys organic gardening, playing guitar and mandolin, fly-fishing, backpacking, botanizing and canoeing with his wife Vivian.

Richard Forster

Supervisor, Amador County

Supervisor Forster was born on July 31, 1960 in Laguna Beach, California. He has resided in Amador County since 1975 and is a proud fifth generation Californian. He graduated from Lone High School in 1978 and the University of California, Davis in 1982 earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural and Managerial Economics. He is a commercial cattle rancher and is employed with the California Youth Authority. Supervisor Forster served on the Amador Water Agency Board of Directors for eight years, the Lone Planning Commission, and numerous community organizations as active member. Richard and his wife, Laurie, were married in 1982 and have two daughters, Lindsey and Tyler. Supervisor Forster was elected to the 2001-2004 and 2005-2008 Board of Supervisors.

Malcolm North

Associate in Forest Ecology, Department of Plant Sciences, U.C. Davis
Research Plant Ecologist, Pacific Southwest Research Station, U.S.
Forest Service

Dr. North's general research interests are in stand dynamics, disturbance regimes, and ecosystem processes of western coniferous forests. In particular Dr. North has focused on understanding how disturbance alters forest structure producing changes that propagate through the ecosystems' processes, food webs and species diversity. Areas Dr. North and students are actively working in include:

- Ecological restoration of fire-suppressed forests
- The effects of management and fire on forest carbon storage and emissions
- The ecological effects of fuels reduction treatments
- Fire history and stand structure of riparian and eastern Sierran forests
- The influence of landscape topography on fire regimes and resulting forest structure and habitat conditions
- Large tree growth and mortality response to climate, fire, and management practices
- Demography and regeneration dynamics of fire-dependent forests
- The structure and microclimate of forest canopies



- Truffles, cone crop, small mammals, and food web dynamics
- Forest understory herb and shrub communities

Pam Giacomini

Member, Board of Forestry

A resident of Hat Creek, Ms. Giacomini was appointed to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection on December 22, 2005. Ms. Giacomini has owned and operated Hat Creek Grown, a natural beef production and sales company since 2003. She and her husband operate a rangeland cattle operation on lands that have been in her family since 1903. She served as director of natural resources and commodities for the Government Affairs Division of the California Farm Bureau Federation from 2001 to 2005. Ms. Giacomini is a member of California Cattlemen's Association.



Steven Kaffka

Director, California Biomass Collaborative

In addition to his position as Director of the California Biomass Collaborative, Dr. Kaffka is an extension specialist in the Department of Plant Sciences at the University of California, Davis. He is chair of the BioEnergy Work Group for the University of California's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources. He participates on several advisory committees for the California Energy Commission and California Air Resources Board, including *ex officio* member of the Bioenergy Interagency Work Group. From 2003 to 2007 Dr. Kaffka was director of the Long Term Research on Agricultural Systems Project. As director he led the development of current and new projects focusing on sustainable agriculture. His commodity assignments include sugar and oilseed crops. Since coming to U.C. Davis in 1992, Dr. Kaffka has also carried out research on water quality and agriculture in the Upper Klamath Basin, and the reuse of saline drainage water for crop, forage, energy biomass feed stocks and livestock production in salt affected areas of the San Joaquin Valley. He has received meritorious service awards from the American Society of Sugar Beet Technologists and the Soil and Water Conservation Society, is past president of the California chapter of the American Society of Agronomy, and past section leader for American Society of Agronomy's division on environmental quality. Dr. Kaffka has M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Cornell University in agronomy and a B.S. from the University of California at Santa Cruz in biology.

Jim McKinney

Supervisor, California Energy Commission

Jim McKinney is a supervisor in the Emerging Fuels and Technologies Office of the California Energy Commission - California's lead agency for energy information and policy development. Mr. McKinney manages the Energy Commission's work on sustainability issues for the Alternative Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program. In that capacity, he is responsible for developing sustainability goals and standards for this new eight-year, \$1 billion funding program that is intended to spur innovation and the commercialization of new technologies in California's alternative fuel and vehicle markets. Mr. McKinney has nearly 25 years' experience conducting environmental assessments for energy systems in California, including thermal and renewable power generation, natural gas, energy infrastructure, and alternative transportation fuels. Prior to joining the Energy Commission's Transportation and Fuels Division, he served as project manager for eight years on the *Environmental Performance Report of California's Electrical Generation System*, a legislatively-required biennial assessment of systems-level environmental impacts of power generation in California and the West. Mr. McKinney began his career with Pacific Gas and Electric Company of San Francisco, and transitioned to the public sector to work at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Region 9 Water Division. He has been with the Energy Commission since 2000. He holds a Masters in

Public Policy from the University of California at Berkeley (emphasis on Environmental Policy), and lives with his family in Davis, near Sacramento, California.

Moderator, Joan Keegan

Assistant Executive Officer, Sierra Nevada Conservancy

Ms. Keegan joined the SNC team in August, 2007 as the Assistant Executive Officer. She brings more than 20 years experience in state government to the position, as well as a great appreciation of SNC's mission and a passion for the Sierra Nevada. Prior to joining the SNC team Ms. Keegan was the Deputy Director for Policy and Planning at the Department of Technology Services and previously worked at the Franchise Tax Board and the Legislative Analyst. Ms. Keegan is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley.





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Symposium Regional Location Moderators

Visalia	<i>Liz van Wagtendonk</i>	evanwag@sierranevada.ca.gov
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